

1916 – 18



Tyneside Irish attacking on the first day of the Somme
Éireannaigh ó cheantar an Tyne i mbun ionsaithe ar an gcéad lá den Somme

In 1916, the British Army undertook a major offensive on the Western Front in the valley of the River Somme. While the 10th Division had already gone to war in 1915, two other Irish divisions – the 16th and the 36th – had been training for this moment. However, barbed wire, machine guns and artillery made the attacking Irishman’s chances of survival slim, despite all his courage and training.

I 1916 thug Arm na Breataine faoi mhórionsaí ar an bhFronta Thiar i ngleann abhainn an Somme. Bhí an 10ú Rannán i mbun catha ó 1915 ach bhí dhá rannán Éireannacha eile – an 16ú agus an 36ú – fós i mbun traenála don ionsaí seo. Ach ba bheag seans a bhí ag ionsaí na nÉireannach, d’ainneoin na traenála, agus na crógachta, in éadan an sreinge deilgní, na meaisínighunnaí agus na hairtléire.

The 16th Division

Many of the soldiers of the 16th division were southern Catholics, encouraged to enlist in 1914 by John Redmond, leader of the National Volunteers. Their baptism of fire came in April 1916; they went on to fight at the Somme, and at Messines in 1917. The Division was effectively destroyed on 21st March 1918, when it was overrun during the great German offensive.

An 16ú Rannán

Caitlicigh ó dheisceart na hÉireann ab ea formhór na saighdiúirí sa 16ú Rannán, a liostáil faoi thionchar John Redmond, ceannaire na nÓglach Náisiúnta. Chuaigh siad sa bhearna bhaoil den chéad uair in Aibreán 1916, throid siad ag an Somme agus ag Messines i 1917. Scriosadh an Rannán, nó geall leis, an 21 Márta 1918, nuair a fuair na Gearmánaigh an ceann is fearr air san ionsaí mór.



Men of the 16th (Irish) Division are transported back for a rest behind the lines during the Battle of the Somme
Iompraítear fir den 16ú Rannán (Éireannach) siar le haghaidh sosa laistiar de na línte i gcaitheamh Chath an Somme



Attack of the Ulster Division at the Somme on the 1st July 1916
Ionsaí Rannán Uladh ag an Somme ar an 1 Iúil 1916

The 36th (Ulster) Division

This Division was one of three-dozen formed as part of Kitchener’s ‘New Army’. These units were created from the enthusiastic volunteers who flocked to enlist in the British Army during the first year of the war. The Ulster Division had its roots in the pre-war Ulster Volunteer Force – as a result many of its members had some basic military experience before joining the Army. Their training was to be put to the severest test in the summer of 1916, when 5,500 men were killed or wounded on 1st July.

An 36ú Rannán (Uladh)

Bhí an Rannán ar cheann den trí dhosaen rannán a cruthaíodh mar chuid de ‘Arm Nua’ Kitchener. Cruthaíodh na haonaid as na hÓglach dúthrachtacha a liostáil ina sluaithe in Arm na Breataine i gcaitheamh chéad bhlianta an chogaidh. Bhí Rannán Uladh fréamhaithe in Óglach Uladh a bunaíodh roimh an chogadh. Chiallaigh sin go raibh taithí mhíleata éigin ag na saighdiúirí sula ndeachaigh siad isteach san Arm. Rachadh an scéal go cnámh na huillinne i samhradh 1916 nuair a chaillfí 5,000 an 1 Iúil, trí bhás nó trí ghortú.



George Watson

from clerk to sergeant

21-year old Scot George Watson was working in Dublin as a clerk when war broke out in 1914. Rather than returning home to enlist, he joined a local regiment (the Royal Dublin Fusiliers).

Despite his unmilitary pre-war job, George rose to the rank of Sergeant, serving in France where he received the brass stripe for being wounded, and acquired several German cap badges. Wounded again (this time severely) in October 1918, George returned to Scotland after his discharge in 1919.

Personal objects of George Watson of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers
1. Recruitment booklet for the 10th (Commercial) Battalion at the Royal Barracks
2. Swagger stick with regimental crest
3. Wallet with souvenir German field cap badges
4. Trench compass, 1918
5. Photograph of George Watson (far left) and fellow soldiers
6. Disabled Soldier's Handbook
7. Identity tag and wound stripe
8. Sergeants' arm stripes. HA:2010.29

George Watson

ó chléireach go saírsint

Bhí an tAlbanach George Watson 21 bliain d’aois agus ag obair mar chléireach i mBaile Átha Cliath nuair a bhris an cogadh amach i 1914. In ionad fillleadh abhaile chun liostáil, chuaigh sé isteach i reisimint áitiúil (Fiúsailéirí Ríoga Bhaile Átha Cliath). D’ainneoin a laghad taithí a bhí aige ar an tsaighdiúireacht roimhe sin, rinneadh saírsint de ar deireadh. Bhí sé ar fiannas sa Fhrainc mar a bhfuair sé an straidhp phráis as a bheith gonta, agus mar a bhailigh sé mórchuid suaithéantas ó chaipíní Gearmánacha. Goineadh é arís (go dona, an uair seo) i nDeireadh Fómhair 1918, agus d’fhill sé ar Albain tar éis dó a bheith scaoilte amach i 1919.

Maisin phearsanta de chuid George Watson as Fiúsailéirí Ríoga Bhaile Átha Cliath;
1. Leabhrán earcaíochta don 10ú Cathlán (Tráchtála) ag an Dúin Ríoga
2. Sliatín spaitseoireachta agus suaithéantas na reisiminte air
3. Tíachóg agus suaithéantais chuimhneacháin ó chaipíní Gearmánacha machaire
4. Compás trínise, 1918
5. Grianghraf de George Watson (i bhfad ar cble) agus saighdiúirí eile
6. Lámhleabhar an tSaighdiúra Míchumasaithe
7. Lipéad aithéantais agus straidhlip chreácha
8. Straidhpeanna muimhille saírsint. HA:2010.29



Duncan Grant Duff

dismounted cavalryman

When the South Irish Horse (a reserve cavalry unit) mobilised in 1914, Duncan Duff joined the regiment. Sent to France, these horsemen were soon limited to routine patrols and escort duties behind the lines.

In September 1917, Duncan and his fellow cavalrymen were retrained as infantry soldiers, and posted to the front lines. As the result of being gassed, Duncan contacted a kidney infection, which eventually led to his death in 1943.

World War I medals of Duncan Grant Duff.
HA:2008.25.2,3,4.

Duncan Grant Duff

marcach ar chois bainte anuas

Nuair a slógadh Marcshlua Dheisceart na hÉireann (aonad marcshlua cúltaca) i 1914, liostáil Duncan Duff sa reisimint. Cuireadh na marcaigh seo chun na Fraince chun gnáthphatróil agus dualgais tionlacain a dhéanamh laistiar de na línte. I Meán Fómhair 1917, cuireadh athoiliúint ar Duncan agus ar na marcaigh eile mar shaighdiúirí coise agus cuireadh ar post iad sna línte tosaigh. Tholg Duncan ionfhabhtú sna duáin de thoradh ionsaí gáis, as a bhfuair sé bás i 1943.

Boinn ón gCéad Chogadh Domhanda de chuid Duncan Grant Duff.
HA:2008.25.2,3,4.



Bernard Reid

volunteer for Ireland

Bernard Reid, born in Dublin in 1886, had helped enroll students into the Irish Volunteers in 1913 while studying at University College Dublin. Answering John Redmond’s call, he enlisted in the 9th Royal Dublin Fusiliers, becoming, according to the citation signed by his divisional general Major-General Hickie, a gallant and devoted officer. Bernard was killed at Loos in June 1916, but in a letter his friend Lt. O’Connor assured his mother that “he did not suffer at all”.

Personal objects of Bernard Reid of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers;
1. World War I medals
2. Widow's Penny
3. Photograph of Bernard Reid in uniform,

4. Framed Certificate referring to his 'gallant conduct and devotion to duty on many occasions, notably 13th and 14th June (1916), signed by Major General Hickie
5. Copy of a letter of condolence from 2nd Lieutenant P.J. O'Connor. HA:2008.35

Bernard Reid

óglach Éireannach

I mBaile Átha Cliath a saolaíodh Bernard Reid i 1886. Chabhraigh sé chun mic léinn a liostáil in Óglaigh na hÉireann i 1913 agus é ina mhac léinn sa Cholaíste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath. Liostáil sé féin sa 9ú chathlán d’Fhiúsailéirí Ríoga Bhaile Átha Cliath, mar fhreagairt ar ghairm John Redmond. Oifigeach cróga dílis a bhí ann, mar a dúirt ginearál a roinne, an Maorghinearál Hickie. Maraíodh Bernard ag Loos i Meitheamh 1916, ach dúirt cara leis, an Leifteanant O’Connor, lena mháthair “nár fhulaing sé in aon chor”.

Maisin phearsanta de chuid Bernard Reid as Fiúsailéirí Ríoga Bhaile Átha Cliath;
1. Boinn ón gCéad Chogadh Domhanda
2. Pingín Baintrí
3. Grianghraf de Bernard Reid in éide

4. Teastas féamaithe ina ndéantar tagairt do 'gallant conduct and devotion to duty on many occasions, notably 13th and 14th June (1916)', agus é sinithe ag an Maorghinearál Hickie
5. Cóip de litir chomhbhróin ón 2ú Leifteanant P.J. O'Connor. HA:2008.35